



MEETING MINUTES – Merced GSP

SUBJECT: Merced GSP Stakeholder Committee Meeting #5

DATE/TIME: September 24, 2018 at 9:30 AM

LOCATION: Castle Conference Center, 1900 Airdrome Entry, Atwater, CA

Stakeholder Committee Members In Attendance:

	Representative	Community Aspect Representation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Alex McCabe	City of Livingston
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Arlan Thomas	MIDAC, growers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ben Migliazzo	Live Oak Farms, growers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bill Spriggs	City of Merced, Merced Irrigation District
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bob Salles	Leap Carpenter Kemps Insurance, insurance industry and natural resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brad Robson	Buchanan Hollow Nut Co. Le Grand-Athlone Water District, growers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Breanne Ramos	Merced County Farm Bureau
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brian Carter	D&S Farms, growers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carol Bonin	Winton M.A.C.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Daniel Machado	Machado Backhoe Inc., construction industry
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Darren Olguin	McSwain MAC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Frenchy Meissonnier	Rice Farmer, rice growers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Galen Miyamoto	Miyamoto Farms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gino Pedretti III	Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Greg Olzack	City of Atwater resident
<input type="checkbox"/>	James (Jim) Marshall	City of Merced
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joe Scoto	Scoto Bros Farms / McSwain Union School District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ladi Asgill	East Merced Resource Conservation District / Sustainable Conservation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maria Herrera	Self-Help Enterprises
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mark Maxwell	University of California, Merced
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maxwell Norton	Retired agricultural researcher
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Parry Klassen	East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition, growers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rick Drayer	Drayer Ranch, Merced cattlemen
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Simon Vander Woude	Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company, dairies

Meeting Minutes



1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review
 - a. Introduction and overview of agenda items given by Charles Gardiner (Catalyst Group)
 - b. There were no comments for the past meeting minutes. Comments and questions from past meeting minutes and further input can be sent via email to Woodard & Curran.
2. Minimum Thresholds Update
 - a. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided a review of the sustainability criteria and an update on the methodology used for developing minimum thresholds for groundwater levels.
 - b. Clarifying questions were asked about the data source and characteristics of the Voluntary CASGEM wells and Domestic Wells from Merced County Database.
 - c. Question: How does a well get populated in the Merced County Database? Answer: Well drilling requires a permit and has been required for several decades. The electronic version of the database includes all permitted domestic wells installed from the mid-1990s onward.
 - d. Question: Are there a sufficient number of wells to set minimum thresholds around vulnerable communities? Answer: There are still gaps in certain areas, but if there isn't a history of monitoring in that area, then it is difficult to set thresholds there. There is good coverage overall but part of the GSP will involve developing additional monitoring locations in these types of areas.
 - e. Question: Do minimum thresholds and a 3-mile radius around monitoring wells end up translating to individual management areas? Answer: The monitoring wells are meant to be indicative of the entire Subbasin. The 3-mile radius is used to select nearby domestic wells for analyzing undesirable results. We will be selecting a subset of monitoring wells to ultimately report long-term to the State for SGMA compliance.
 - f. Question: Will SGMA compliance be determined based on seasonal measurements reported to CASGEM (e.g. March and October measurements influenced by seasonality)? Answer: Each GSP defines its compliance/violation standards and it will vary year-to-year as there are wet/dry cycles. Criteria will be developed that account for seasonal and year-to-year variations.
 - g. A concern was raised that on the minimum thresholds map for groundwater elevations, the "white area" (unincorporated) on east side of Subbasin has no wells representation. Answer: At the next meeting, we can put together a map of all the wells used in the Merced Water Resources Model (MercedWRM) in that area.
 - h. Question: Agricultural wells are much deeper than domestic wells (typically), so will they be included in the analysis? Answer: Because they're typically deeper, they're expected to be covered by this methodology which is protecting the shallowest wells.
 - i. Public comment: Hitting thresholds may be economically infeasible and a future iteration may need to include ways to deliver water to shallow domestic users as a more efficient way of mitigating undesirable results.
 - j. Question: How many monitoring wells are there in total and how many are driven by the domestic well depth for the minimum threshold? Answer: There are 65 monitoring wells total and 25 of them (38%) are driven by the shallowest domestic well to set the minimum threshold.



3. Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model

- a. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided an overview of the HCM section of the GSP and some example maps that will be included in the section writeup that will be provided for SC member review in the next few months.
- b. Question: Will the plan be periodically updated to account for new information/data on water quality Constituents of Concern (COCs) in the future? Answer: Yes.

4. Projected Water Budget and Sustainable Yield

- a. Alyson Watson (Woodard & Curran) provided a reminder on the assumptions and results of the projected conditions baseline groundwater budget, as well as a presentation of the initial results of sustainable yield groundwater budget.
- b. Public Question: Has the City of Merced possible use of surface water for drinking water been included in projected water budget? Answer: No, but it may be considered as a future project and we'd need more details/parameters on that use.
- c. Question: Why does net deep percolation show as very similar across all 50 years (would expect to see large variation due to hydrology)? Answer: Net deep percolation comes primarily from agricultural use and not precipitation, since the sum of agriculture and precipitation will be roughly the same regardless of hydrology.
- d. Additional clarifying questions were asked about basin inflow from Sierra Nevada Mountains, which is largely seen in gain from streams (surface water) and less so from boundary inflow (long-term migration of groundwater from the eastern boundary).
- e. Public question: If you reduced pumping by an amount equal to the "Change in Storage" number, will we be in balance? Answer: Not exactly – there are a lot of interrelated complicating factors that respond to one another, such that reducing pumping has multiple different effects on other items in the balance.
- f. Question: Will the recent public trust doctrine court case (*Environmental Law Foundation vs. State Water Resources Control Board*) affect our "Gain from Streams" inflow value? Answer: No, because it's a natural system where inflow happens naturally. We will need to look at if pumping has a negative impact on stream level.
- g. Question: A localized project will help a localized area, but how do our geographically spaced projects help the whole Subbasin? Answer: A local project will still have an impact on the basin-wide water budget. It will also have localized impacts on groundwater elevations.
- h. Several clarifying questions were asked about what the basin-average sustainable yield allocation means and what it applies to (e.g. it is based on gross acres across the entire basin, since some landowners may have rights to pump even if they're not pumping now) and where the reductions in pumping occurred in the modeled scenario (across all uses on all acres). It was explained that the 1AF/ac is simply a calculation of the projected sustainable yield of the basin divided by gross acres and is not meant as a suggested management action allocation.

5. Public Outreach Update

- a. Charles Gardiner (Catalyst Group) provided an update to public outreach efforts, including planning for a public meeting in early December.



6. Interbasin Coordination Update
 - a. The project team held an initial meeting with Delta-Mendota Subbasin representatives, but it looks like further coordination efforts won't begin until early 2019 as the Delta-Mendota Subbasin is farther behind Merced Subbasin's efforts due to a complex organizational structure of multiple GSAs and GSPs.
7. Substitute Environmental Document (SED) Update
 - a. Hicham ElTal (Merced Irrigation District) provided an explanation of what SED is and some associated details about how it was developed and some potential impacts it may have on surface water flows to the San Joaquin River.
8. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda
 - a. No public comments were raised.
9. Next Steps and Next Meeting

**Next Regular Meeting
October 22, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.**

Please note the ½ hour earlier start time for special topics
Castle Conference Center, 1900 Airdrome Entry, Atwater, CA
Information also available online at mercedsgma.org

Note: If you need disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, please contact Merced County, Community and Economic Development staff at 209-385-7654 at least 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting.